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DUTCH ARTISTS OF THE LAST TWENTY-FIVE YEARS.

By JOHAN GRAMM.

II.

Many of the names I mentioned in my article last month must have been entirely new to the American public. I will commence this second article with two familiar ones: Mesdag and Israels. No—not the famous marine painter or the Nestor of the Dutch school are meant. These are as well known in the United States as they are here. I mean Mrs. Mesdag, *née* Van Houten, the marine painter's wife, and Isaac Israels, Joseph's son.

MRS. MESDAG-VAN HOUTEN is a famous landscape artist and her work announces at once the cardinal truth that she is herself, that she is somebody. She possesses a great degree of independence and individuality.

It is very possible that her conception of nature would not please every one, for the advocates of scrupulous imitation do not find in her work anything of their choice. To paint an apple, or a lemon, or a flower in such a way that one exclaims in admiration: "Why, you could pluck them!" is not her *forte*. She wants to keep you a certain distance away from the canvas, then to regale you with such a beautiful quality of color and tone, such a delightful harmony of tints, that you are entirely satisfied with her free, broad conception. Only think of one of her large stillives, with a magnificent blue Japanese cloisonné vase against yellow damask, decorating the wall of a salon, and you may imagine the wealth of color that you will revel in. And then the heath, with its solitary, poor cottages, its sheepfolds and its sombre quiet, is a subject that appeals to this artist with great force. The way she represents them affects one as hypnotically as the notes of a symphony.

ISAAC ISRAELS has been successful from the first. His name, which has such a renown in artistic circles, may have been a help to him, it also imposed severe demands. When he exhibited his first work, "Departure of Soldiers for the Colonies," a composition that was painted *con amore*, it met with instantaneous approbation. The work was apparently done at white heat, and his creative genius had expressed itself most happily. Then came the portrait of a young woman, full of distinction and revealing unusual tenderness. For some time he devoted himself to scenes of soldier-life, from the barracks, the *cantine*, or the parade ground. Then silence. Years went by without a sign of life, when suddenly Isaac Israels showed a number of *plein air* studies, and thenceforth he has been known as one of the few impressionistic painters among us. His work is taken by the public with avidity, hence an example is rarely seen in exhibitions or dealers' places.

Another of the younger men—he is only thirty-two years old—is WILLY SLUYTER, who started as a caricaturist with great *éclat*. Of late years he has been depicting the fisher folk of Katwyk and its beach and boats. At first it seemed that he had better kept his ready crayon that analyzed so typically the human comedy, but we were soon undeceived, and now we recognize a powerful painter of shorescapes. His work is very strong.

ANDRÉ BROEDELÉ is one year his senior, and paints interiors and figures with rich, deep color. His work is represented in famous collections in London.

Of the same age is SIMON MARIS, the son of Willem. I saw a short time ago a figure piece of this artist, a young mother with her child cuddling in her arms, that I learned had been bought by an American dealer. It is a very characteristic canvas that reminds one a little of the rare work of Mathys Maris, but is still a great deal different. It is one of the finest pieces of painting I have seen.

These three young men augur that the Dutch school is not going to be a mere century period, but a progressive development of artistic elements. And there are others who will prove this. There is JACQUES ZON, with his life-like Scheveningen types—a very promising painter, indeed. And TOON DUPUYS, not yet thirty, is going to be one of our big sculptors. A. BRIËT, born in India in 1867, has a deep color-sense which makes his beautiful interiors very captivating.

Different is the work of another young man, B. SCHREGEL, a pupil of the Hague Academy. His "Mill at Stompwyk" might just as well have been painted by W. Roelofs—it is so fresh, so tintling with light is the heavy-clouded sky. His "Potato Peeler" in a Rembrandtesque cellar brought the name of Maes or of Pieter de Hooghe on the lips—it was painted with such a depth of tone and color. Later he has delighted most in painting golden sunlight as it reflects on the white wall of a barn or farmhouse in blinding brilliancy.

CHARLES P. GRUPPÉ is an American who has become one of us. We have learned here how the Americans to-day are enthusiastic over the Dutch school—its atmosphere, its charming simplicity and colorful palette. And this painter argued with himself and said: "Let me go over to this promised land and learn the art of Gabriel, Weissenbruch and the others."

So Gruppé settled in The Hague, and he has astonished many with the wonderful power of assimilation that he showed in his work. Now he paints a beach that one would be inclined to ascribe to Mesdag, then again he surprises you with a meadow that could have been creditably signed with the name of J. H. Weissenbruch, or a heath with a flock of sheep that has all the quality of a Mauve. And yet this artist is not an imitator, but seems to be more impressionable in various ways than most men. He felt like those great masters felt, and so he painted. Frequently enough he shows that he is himself, after all.

EVERT PIETERS is about fifty years old, and naturally belongs to the men of the last quarter century. He changes his painting from landscape to marine or to figure. He is strong in the latter; his "Harbor of Volendam" smiles at us, full of sunny tints; nature serene is in his "Twilight in The Hague Woods." But his beach, with the cart and horse and shell-fisher, bespeaks the master hand.

A few words yet about some artists of this period who have died.

MRS. ROOSENBOOM was one of our best flower painters, and PIETER STORTENBEKER a cattle painter of great reputation. J. M. VROLYK, his pupil, surpassed him in the luscious landscape settings, while his cattle also were painted with greater freedom. GEORGE POGGENBEEK was foremost in his meadow scenes, studded with cows browsing by the *sloot*, the muddy ditches that in straight course run through the meadows, or lying under the shade of sunlit trees, chewing the cud of contentment. THÉOPHILE DE BOCK had a powerful brush. He ought to have lived in the 17th or 18th centuries to decorate the walls of our patrician homes with his broadly conceived, stately *allees* of beeches in brilliant sunlight. He cherished such admiration for nature that he knew no greater pleasure than to imitate her as faithfully and true as possible. He was a rapid transcriber of the impressions which nature gave him. When he died, a master had laid down his brushes.

Art in the public schools is an important element in furthering education and culture. The public school must recognize its mission to develop the intellect broadly, and drawing should be a most important part of the curriculum.

The schools of Illinois are especially favored in that the scholars have each year an opportunity to send in samples of their work to a

State exhibition which is held at the University of Illinois under direction of Prof. Frank Forrest Frederick, who has charge of the university's department of art and design. The standards set at the exhibitions have each year improved the quality of the work submitted.

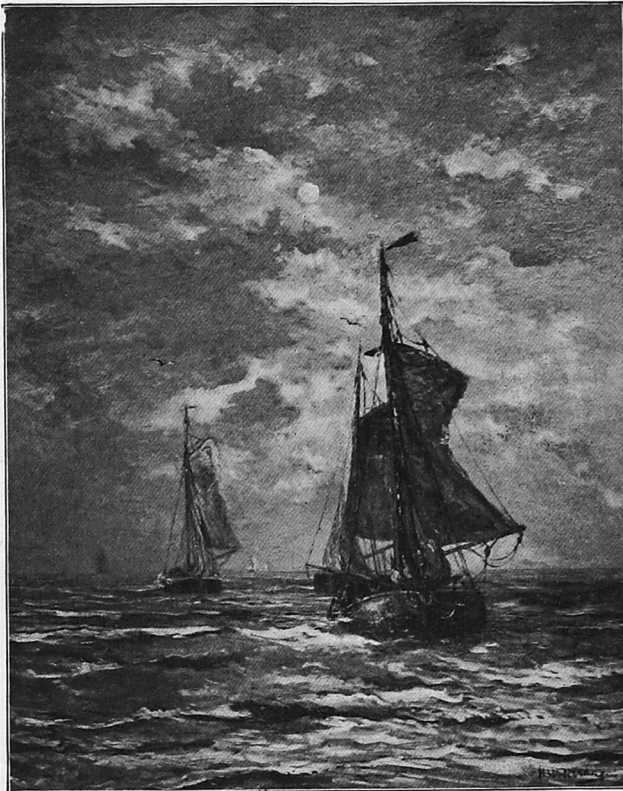
Is there not in New York State some energetic person like Prof. Frederick who will take the initiative to have such an exhibition held for the scholars of this State? At the first State exhibition THE COLLECTOR AND ART CRITIC will offer a gold medal for the best work done.

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One of the landmarks on Fifth avenue for many years has been Mr. Norman's Auction Room. This has always been a genuinely honest sales place, because the auctioneer never pretended to sell what he knew was not as he stated. When dubious pictures were catalogued there with high-faluting names the onus rested on the consignor, and Mr. Norman never in any way tried to endorse such statements or enlarge on their value.

By the course of real estate movements this old place has now been closed and the business is transferred to the former building of the Tiffany Glass Company on 4th avenue corner of 24th street. Spacious galleries are here provided for the disposal of the varied lots that are brought to the auction block.

A great improvement over the former place is the excellent system of lighting by Frink reflectors, which enables one to view the pictures on the walls under the best conditions.



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H. W. MESDAG

RETURN OF THE FISHING BOATS